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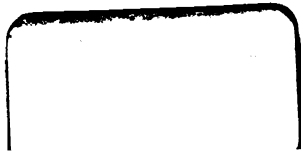
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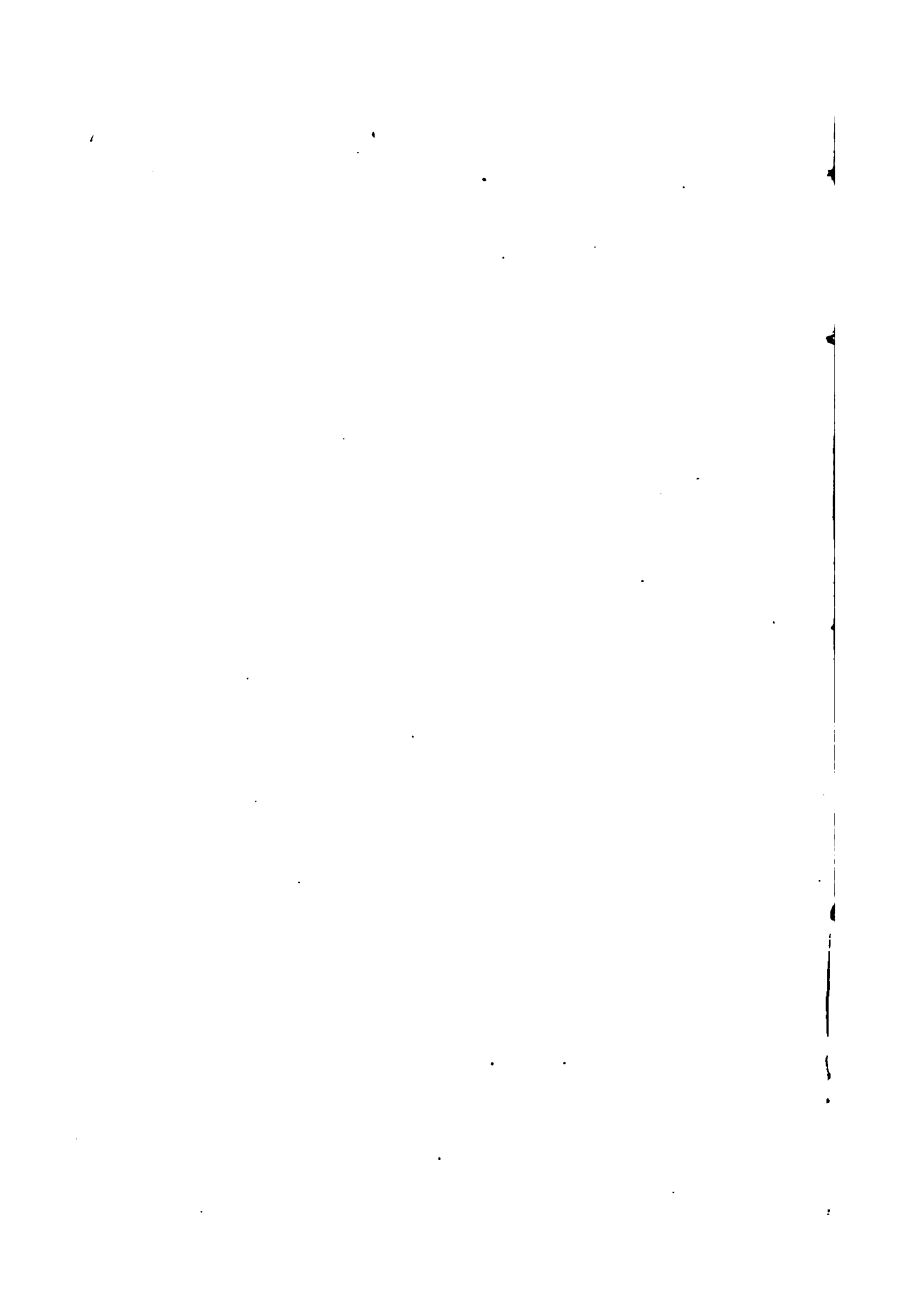
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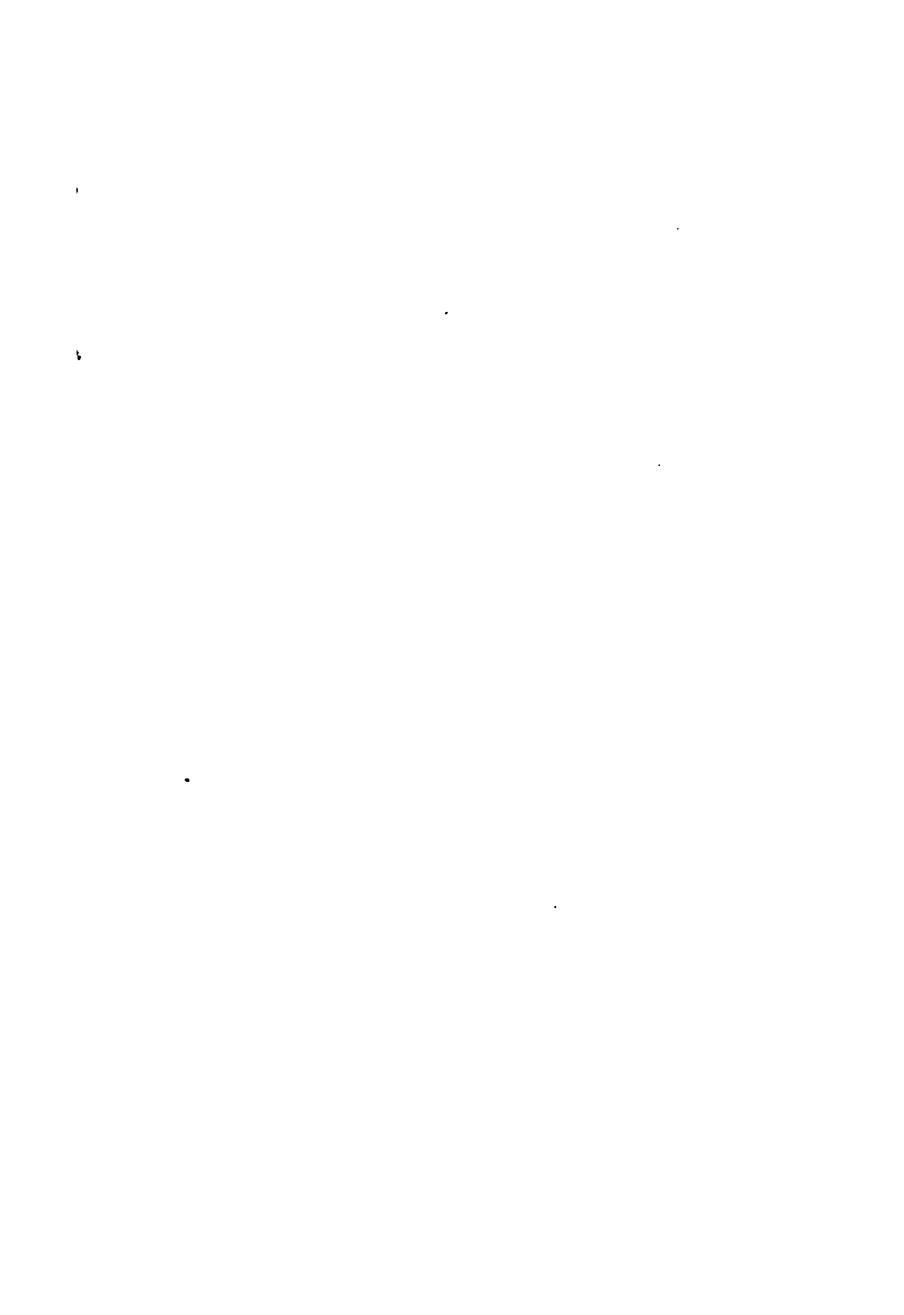


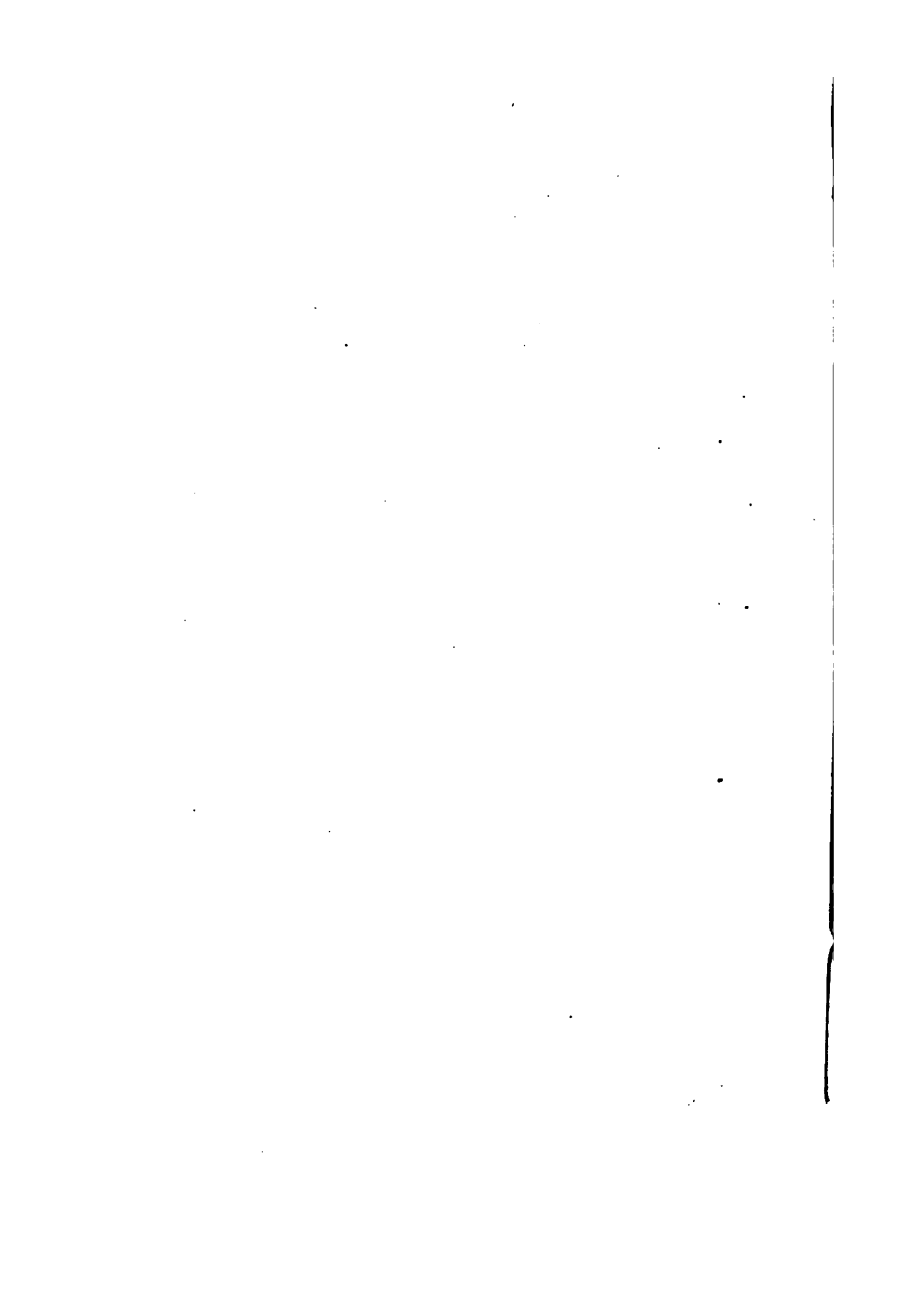
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BEING

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT,

COMBINED FROM MATTHEW 5 : 1; 8 : 27; LUKE 6 : 20-49.

BY

E. MICHENER.

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PHILADELPHIA:

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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It is alike gratifying to the Christian and the philanthropist, that the condition of our race has been, and continues to be, progressive. That God, in his manifold wisdom and goodness, has given successive dispensations to his creature, man; each wisely adapted to the then present condition of those for whom it was given; each conditioned on simple obedience to its own requirements, as sufficient to render the doers of the law perfect; each progressive in its character; approaching nearer to and partaking more of, the spirituality which characterizes the dispensation of Jesus Christ, and which is intended more closely to assimilate man to his Maker. I need only refer to the dispensations of Moses, and of Jesus Christ, to illustrate this view.

The dispensation of Moses was exter-

nal and ritual ; but, its types and ceremonies were singularly symbolical of something higher ; holding out the hope and the expectation, through prophetic vision, of that far more excellent one which should follow,—the dispensation of Jesus Christ.

This latter, while it is altogether internal and spiritual in its higher attributes, leading the soul up to the perfection of Deity, does not fail to recognize man's responsibility to his fellow-men, for the proper performance of his moral and social duties.

The law was given by Moses, but the Ten Commandments were, pre-eminently, inscribed on "two tables of testimony ; tables of stone ; written with the finger of God." "The tables were the work of God ; and the writing was the writing of God ;" emblematic, alike, of perfection and of duration.

On the one was written :

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of thy God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

On the other :

5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods, &c.

Thus we find the fundamental principles of religious truth and of moral rectitude, our duties to God and to our fellow-men, were more emphatically enunciated, and made to underlie the ceremonial law.

The Sermon on the Mount, so called, affords a most remarkable recognition and amplification of those underlying principles, and beautifully epitomizes the dispensation of Jesus Christ.

Commentators have divided the sermon into ten parts, which they believe respectively elucidate the Ten Commandments, as indicated in the following pages :

They go even further, and imagine that the ten first epistles of St. Paul are so many disquisitions, intended still further to illustrate the Sermon on the Mount, as it illustrates the Ten Commandments.

Be this as it may, there is a remarkable parallelism between them ; and the reader who will sit down to the investigation, with a prayerful desire to learn in the school of Christ, will rise from the task a wiser and a better man.

E. M.

## INTRODUCTION

BY THE EVANGELISTS.

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MATTHEW 5 : 1, 2.

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them.

MARK 3 : 13, 14, 15.

And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would, and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.(<sup>1</sup>)

LUKE 6 : 12, 13, 17, 20.

And it came to pass in those days, that he went up into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.

And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said :

T H E

## Sermon on the Mountain.<sup>(2)</sup>

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MATT. 5 : 3-48 ; 6 : 1-34 ; 7 : 1-27.

LUKE 6 : 20-49.

I.<sup>(3)</sup>

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs  
is the Kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn *now*, for  
they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall  
inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and  
thirst after righteousness, *now*, for they  
shall be filled

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall  
obtain mercy.

Blessed are they pure in heart, for they  
shall see God.



Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

*Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast your name out as evil, for the Son of man's sake.*

*Rejoice ye in that day, and be exceeding glad, for behold your reward is great in heaven. For in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets which were before you.*

*But woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation.*

*Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger.*

*Woe unto you that laugh, now, for ye shall mourn and weep.*

*Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.*

## II.

Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill can not be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

## III.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot<sup>(4)</sup> or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

## IV.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. But whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.

Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver

thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

Ye have heard it said, by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever, shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said, by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I say unto you, Swear not at all ;<sup>(6)</sup> neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.

Ye have heard that it hath been said,

An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

*Give to every man that asketh of thee. From him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. And of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again.*

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies,<sup>(6)</sup> bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven;

for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? *for sinners also love those that love them*; do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

*And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.*

*And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, hoping to receive as much again?*

*But love your enemies and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest, for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.*



Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.(7)

## V.

Take heed, that ye do not your righteousness (8) before men to be seen of them, otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.

And when thou prayest thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray, standing in the synagogues and in

the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

But when ye pray use not vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be ye not, therefore, like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.

After this manner, therefore, pray ye : Our Father, which art in heaven ; hallowed be thy name ; thy kingdom come ; thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil ; for thine

is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you ; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Moreover, when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face ; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

## VI.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth

corrupt and where thieves break through and steal ; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

Therefore, I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your

body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Therefore, take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we

drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek); for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

## VII.

*Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.*

And with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again; *give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure,*

*pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.*

*Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?*

*The disciple is not above his master, but every one that is perfect, shall be as his master.*

*And why beholdest thou the mote<sup>(9)</sup> that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or, how wilt thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye?*

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.<sup>(10)</sup>

## VIII.

Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread ; will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him ?

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them ; for this is the law and the prophets.

Enter ye in at the strait gate ; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that



leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

## IX.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits, *for every tree is known by his own fruit.* Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.

*A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good, and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil, for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*

## X.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; and why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.

Therefore, *whosoever cometh to me and*

*heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like. He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock. And when the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat vehemently upon that house, it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.*

*But he that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand without a foundation; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat vehemently upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof.*

The few notes which are appended are not addressed to learned biblicists, but to ordinary readers, hoping thereby to elicit thought and increase their interest in the record of Christ, of which this is a part.

Neither are they intended to bear upon doctrinal points.

## NOTES.

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(1.) It seems now to be generally understood, by commentators, that the word which is here and in divers places elsewhere in the New Testament, translated *devil*, should have been rendered *demon*, an evil or unclean spirit, leaving the harsher name to be applied exclusively to his Satanic Majesty.

The Jews, and probably all the surrounding nations, were believers in the transmigration of the spirits of wicked men into the bodies of the living, causing them untold misery and death. Those into whom they were supposed to enter were said to be *possessed of demons*, evil or unclean spirits. And it is quite probable that many ordinary diseases were ascribed to this cause.

Opinions vary in regard to those *possessed cases*, recorded by the Evangelists. But if

we may be allowed to judge from the histories furnished, they will be found similar to the ordinary forms of diseases still prevalent, and by no means within the domain of *demonology*.

But it must be admitted, upon the same evidence, either that Jesus and the Evangelists did, themselves, believe in the *possession of demons*, or that they connived at, and did not rebuke, the so great and widespread evil. The latter is probably the fact. Be it so. There were many abuses which Jesus did not directly rebuke. Thus, he was born and lived subject to the Mosaic law; yet, it was his mission to abrogate that law, and he did it. Not by declaiming against it, not by the open violation of it, but by the operation of the silent, and unseen, influences of the new covenant of grace, which he came to introduce.

The belief in demons can not be admitted into the Christian Formula, whatever claim it may derive from the Evangelical record;

yet it might have been expedient for them to tolerate it for a season, rather than to arouse the inveterate prejudices of the people.

The following extract will show the gross ignorance, the degrading superstition, the strong prejudices, of the people in those times.

Josephus is justly esteemed one of the most learned and most trustworthy of the Jewish historians. He was of the same tribe, and almost a contemporary with Jesus. His testimony is, therefore, the more valuable in this connection. Speaking of the extraordinary attainments of Solomon, he says:

“ God also enabled him to learn that skill, which expels demons, which is a science, useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations, also, by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return. And this method of cure is of great force unto this day. For I have seen a cer-

tain man of my own country, whose name was Eleazar, relieving people that were demoniacal, in the presence of Vespasian and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers.

“The manner of the cure was this: He put a ring that had a root, of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon, to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which, he drew out the demon through his nostrils, and when the man fell down, immediately, he adjured him to return into him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed.

“And when Eleazar would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set, a little way off, a pan or basin full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overset it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man. And when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon was showed very manifestly.”



The same writer, elsewhere, says: "Demons are no other than the spirits of the wicked, that enter into men, that are alive, and kill them."

(2.) This memorable discourse has usually been called the *Sermon on the Mount*. But there may be reason to doubt where it was delivered, or to what audience it was specially addressed. The answer to these questions can not either add to or detract from the value of the teaching, but may lead to a clearer perception of the sublime truths which it inculcates.

It is only mentioned by Matthew and Luke, and they do not render it alike. Luke omits a large portion of what Matthew furnishes, and adds some things not noticed by him. Hence some suppose that they do not record the same discourse, and call that in Matthew the *Sermon on the Mount*, and that in Luke the *Sermon on the Plain*.

I agree with those who consider them as

one, and have, accordingly, combined them. For distinction I have printed whatever is derived from Luke in italics, whether a single word or an entire paragraph.

A reference to the *introduction* will show that Jesus had two objects in view when he ascended the mountain,—to pray, and to appoint the twelve apostles. For both these purposes he would rather seek seclusion than to gather a multitude. And Mark probably alludes to the same occasion, when he expressly says, that *he called unto him, whom he would.*

I am, therefore, inclined to accept the account given by Luke, that after having *prayed*, called *whom he would*, and *appointed* the twelve, “He came down with them and stood in the plain, and a company of his disciples and a great multitude of people,” and that he there gave forth that most admirable compend of the Christian’s faith and practice.

(3.) I have in this way divided the ser-

mon into ten parts, as mentioned in the preface. Robert Mimpriss observes: "These are generally distinguished each from the others, by some peculiarity of form, as well as of subject.

The *first* consists of beatitudes, describing the Christian life.

The *second* calls for the manifestation of that life.

The *third* points to the truth and importance of that, whereby the life divine is nourished.

The *fourth* is a contrast between the law and the truth of the Word, as revealed by Him, who introduces us into the perfect law of liberty.

The *fifth* warns against formality, and directs to the true manner of serving God, who seeth in secret.

The *sixth* shows the reasonableness of faith in God, and the folly of that worldly wisdom, which is destructive of the spiritual life.

The *seventh* forbids presumption in judging, and the prostitution of holy things.

The *eighth* invites to ask, seek, knock, with the assurance of a favorable answer. Then it gives the golden rule of the true follower of Christ, and points to the entrance of his fold,—the *strait gate*.

The *ninth* bids beware of false prophets, and tells how they and the true witnesses can be known and distinguished, by their fruits.

The *tenth* tells that nothing can withstand the trial, except that which is in truth, founded upon the rock, which is Christ.

The same writer adds: "These ten sections of our Lord's exposition of the New Covenant, may be reviewed, as exhibiting the manner in which God, by his Gospel, writes his law (the ten commandments), in its spirituality, upon the fleshy tablets of the heart."

(4.) "*One jot.*" Rather, one *yod*, which is

the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. The law must first be fulfilled to the utmost, to the letter, however small it may appear.

(5.) *Swear not.* The practice of swearing is reprehensible under every possible circumstance. Of vulgar profanity, nothing can be said in extenuation. Nor can we possibly believe that any large proportion of legal oaths are strictly true, and free from the taint of perjury. "Swearing (says a late writer) in civil matters is become so frequent that the *dread* and *obligation* of an oath are utterly lost in it. In certain places, where oaths are frequently administered, people have been known to kiss their thumb or pen, instead of the book, hoping thereby to avoid the sin of perjury. The Jews maintained that a man might swear with his lips, and annul it in the same moment in his heart. The best way is to have as little to do as possible with oaths. An oath will not bind a knave or a liar, and an honest man

needs none, for his character and conduct swear for him. On this subject, the advice of Epictetus is very good: 'Swear not at all if possible; if you can not avoid, do it as little as you can.'

I have quoted the excellent Adam Clarke. But why did he not rub away the scales from his own eyes, that he might see clearly to administer the only effectual remedy for the evil. "Let your communications be, yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil."

Necessity knows no law, acknowledges no evil. "Have as little to do as possible with oaths." "Swear not at all if possible." Why there is no earthly power which can deprive a man of this, "possible." If it is wrong to swear, it must be right not to do so. And if he wills to do the right, where is the compelling power, which can oblige him to do the wrong? If God wills that he should suffer persecution at the hand of power, for refusing to do the wrong, let it be so. But

let him ask in the language of one formerly, "Whether it be right, in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye?" The reward of well-doing shall be his. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Friends, as a religious society, have had a valuable experience in the refusal to take an oath; when will others become willing to follow their example for the support of this Christian testimony?

(6.) *Love your enemies.* The proper performance of this Christian duty, is perhaps the most difficult obstacle in the path of the Christian traveller. It is the highest, the steepest, the last Alpine peak he has to encounter in his journey Zionward. "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." What a strange and impracticable doctrine this seems to be. Yet how appropriate. God is love;

Christianity, in its purity, is nothing but love, peace, and good-will to men. Love is the foundation of the Christian's rule. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so unto them, for this is the law and the prophets."

Jesus Christ came to establish the kingdom of heaven among men. That kingdom, which was foretold by the prophets, when nations "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, neither shall they learn war any more." That kingdom, which was announced by the angels on the plains of Bethlehem, "Glory to God, in the highest, on earth, peace, good will to men." That kingdom, which denies the gratification of sensual passions and worldly ambition, but consists in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Righteousness without sin, peace without strife, and joy without remorse.

In this millennial kingdom, all wars and fightings, all cruelty and revenge, all force



and compulsion, all strife and contention, all envy and jealousy, all injustice and wrong, all covetousness and longing after that which belongs to another, must cease forever. "They would sit every man under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, and none would make them afraid." For the earth would be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the water covers the sea."

It was undoubtedly the grand mission of Jesus Christ to introduce and establish this peaceful kingdom among men. But his mission has not yet been fulfilled. It is, therefore, imperative upon us to inquire, why has it been so long delayed? The reason is obvious.

For more than eighteen centuries, millions upon millions of professing Christians have been successively brought upon the stage. But they have generally made the profession without having the possession of that pure love, which is declared to be the badge

of true discipleship with Christ. They have loudly proclaimed themselves to be his followers, yet they have as generally neglected to do the work which he commanded them to do. They have not been, what they professed to be, Christians. Hence it is that the kingdom of Christ has not been, thus long, established among men.

In every age, and in every nation, those who have professed the name of Christ, have, at the same time, ignored his principles and disobeyed his commands. Under an ostensible Christian garb, they have sought to gratify their own selfish and carnal wills and propensities, and thus "have crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

The converse must also be true. As the difficulty of performing this Christian duty, and the momentous consequences which would result therefrom; so have been the manifold evils which have resulted from its non-performance, and which con-

tinues to deluge the earth with blood, and to shroud the fair face of nature in sack-cloth and ashes.

(7.) *Be ye therefore perfect, &c.* There are those who affect to believe that this divine requisition is an impossibility. It is not possible for the creature to attain to the same high degree of perfection with the Creator, but it is possible for him to become relatively so in his allotted sphere. Everything was created by God, and by him pronounced *good*, which signifies to be *perfect*. As Pope says :

“ All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body nature is, and God the soul.

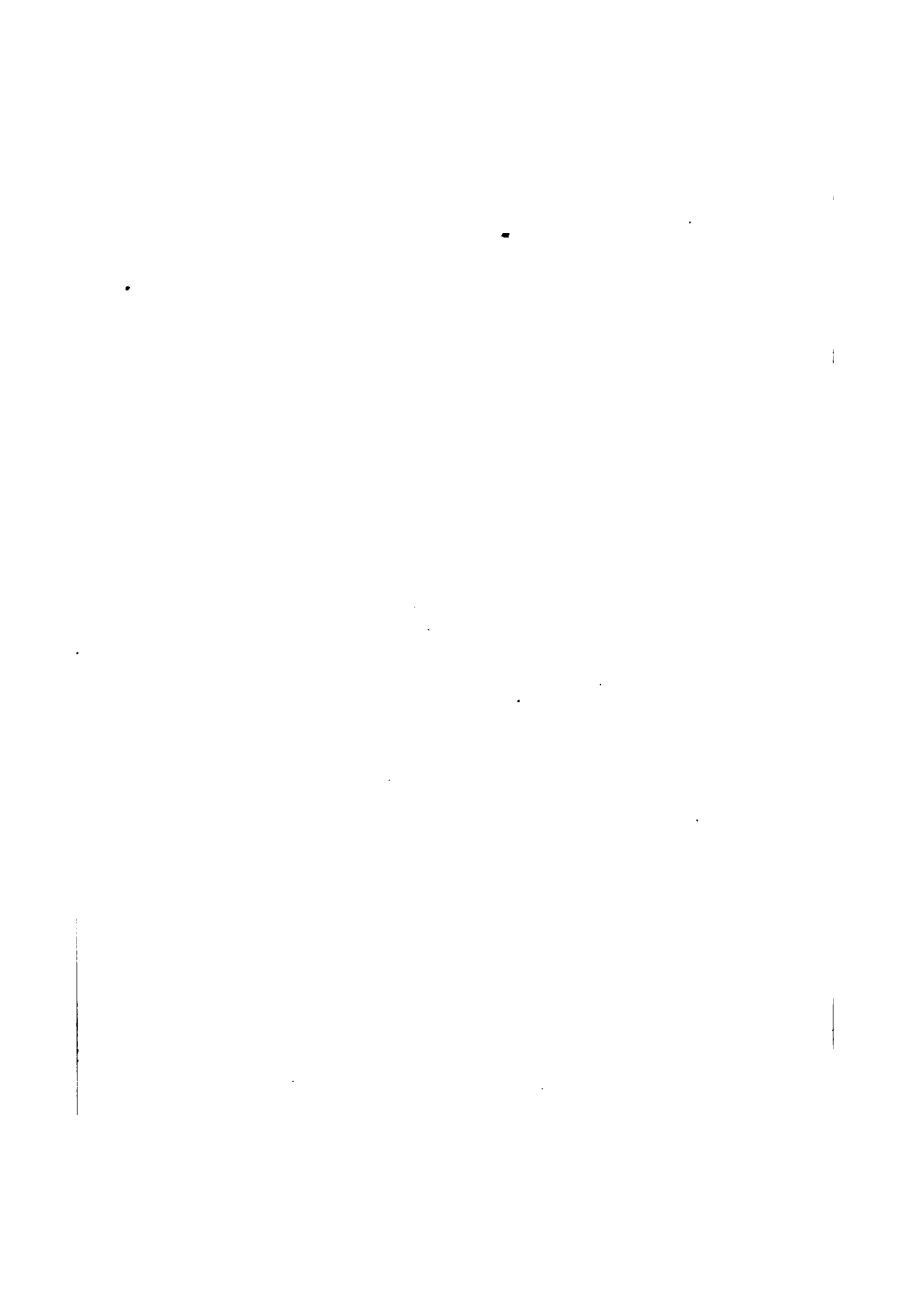
. . . . .  
As full, as perfect, in a hair, as heart,  
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,  
As the rapt seraph, that adores and burns.”

(8.) *Do not your alms* (righteousness), &c. Commentators mostly agree to this correction of the text. The word which they have

substituted for *alms* seems to be applied in a generic sense, so as to include the alms, the prayers, and the fastings of the verses immediately following.

(9.) *The mote.* Adam Clarke and others prefer the word *splinter*, a small piece of wood. It compares and contrasts better with *beam*, and is equally expressive.

(10.) *Give not, &c.* The members of this paragraph need transposing, thus: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, lest they turn again and rend you. Neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet."



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